



LESSON,—SUNDAY, MAY 24, 1908.

Jesus' Death and Burial.

John xix., 28-42. Memory verses 39, 40. Read John xix., 17-42.

Golden Text.

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. I. Cor. xv., 3.

Home Readings.

- Monday, May 18.—John xviii., 28-40.
- Tuesday, May 19.—John xix., 1-16.
- Wednesday, May 20.—John xix., 17-42.
- Thursday, May 21.—Matt. xxvii., 31-50.
- Friday, May 22.—Matt. xxvii., 51-66.
- Saturday, May 23.—Isa. liiii., 1-12.
- Sunday, May 24.—Ps. xxii., 1-24.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Who can tell me what we were studying about in our last lesson, and some of the people we learnt about in it? We learnt how Judas betrayed Jesus, how all his friends went away and left him, and how Peter declared that he did not even know Jesus, so that when Jesus was being tried he was all alone. Can anyone tell what a trial is? Suppose something is stolen to-day and some man is arrested because the police think he is the thief. He is taken before the judge and there the lawyers and the jury and the judge all try to find out if the man really is guilty and how much he deserves to be punished if he is guilty. But Jesus' trial was not like that; at his trial the people all just tried to see how they could kill him, for they hated him and did not intend to do him justice, so he was condemned to death, to be crucified. Judas betrayed Christ, his disciples all left him, Peter denied him, the Jews determined to crucify him, Pilate, the Roman governor, gave the order, and the Roman soldiers took Jesus away and crucified him. But were all these people the only ones to blame for our dear Saviour's death? Let us look at the golden text and see what it says: 'Christ died for our sins.' Do any of you ever sin? Ah, yes, indeed, we all sin, and so we must remember that whoever sins has a very real share in putting Jesus to death, because it was sin, this world's sin, that made it necessary for Jesus to die, and now while we learn about that strange, sad, day when Jesus died, let us all remember that we have a part in his sorrow and that the great salvation from sin is for each one of us as well as for the people who lived on earth during that time long ago.

FOR THE SENIORS.

The possibility of crowding any real study of this greatest of subjects into anything like half an hour is so unthinkable that the previous home work for the scholars should be more than ever impressed. Again all four of the gospels should be considered, and although the various examinations of Christ before Annas, Caiaphas, the Sanhedrin, Pilate, Herod, and Pilate again, cannot be dwelt upon, they should be briefly reviewed in order to gain a clearer understanding of all the incidents of those terrible twenty-four hours. The last supper on Thursday evening, the long and sorrowful evening with his disciples, the walk to the garden, his lonely agony, the betrayal, rough arrest, desertion, denial, the mockery of justice and nine hours of it in the various trials, the scourging and abuse, all preceded the agony of the crucifixion. There is little wonder that our Lord was too faint to bear his cross upon the road out of the city, and little wonder that the pitiful women (Luke xxiii., 27) wept at his appearance. It was about nine o'clock that

the cross bearing our Redeemer was erected and not until some six hours later that the tortured body yielded its spirit into God's hands. Throughout his account John insists on the fulfilment of prophecy as of the utmost importance, and the golden text for the lesson also emphasizes this. How literal the fulfilment was is evidenced by a comparison of such verses as Matt xxvii., 39, 41, 43 with Psalm xxii., 7, 8; of John xix., 28, 29, with Psalm xxii., 15, and lxix., 21; Mark xv., 34 with Psalm xxii., 1. These are only examples; Psalm xxii., 18; Zech. xii., 10; Ex. xii., 46, and that wonderful fifty-third chapter of Isaiah are others. As far as possible these prophecies should be traced and noted.

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

Verse 28. Jesus knowing that all things are now finished. He who reads the story of Calvary with a sense only of its tragic elements, reads it wrongly; there were also triumphal elements, equally plain and definite. The chief way in which we are able to perceive the triumphant element in the cross, is by remembering how Christ Himself spoke of the cross, and in what spirit He approached it. You will remember two things: first, that Christ spoke of the cross very early in His ministry, and, second, that He always spoke of it as something predetermined. Did He not distinctly declare that He laid down His life, but that no man took it from Him; and do we not find at every point of the unfolding tragedy the reiteration of that phrase so constantly associated with the incident of His infancy—that it might be fulfilled? When once we grasp this truth the sense of the merely tragic in Calvary is lost in the sense of the purely triumphant. . . . This is the joy of the cross. Jesus has not lost His way. He moves steadily to His goal. He is no victim of accident—at every step something was done which was long predicted, something that the will of God made necessary and inevitable.—W. J. Dawson, 'The Reproach of Christ.'

Verse 34. There came out blood and water. St. John alone recounts the incident, and it was evidently wholly inexplicable to him. He could only asseverate solemnly that he had beheld it with his own eyes. Yet it is in no wise incredible; and medical science has confirmed the Evangelist's testimony, and has so explained the phenomenon that it sheds light upon the death of our Lord and reveals somewhat of the anguish of His Passion. Jesus died literally of a broken heart—of 'agony of mind, producing rupture of the heart.' His heart swelled with grief until it burst, and then the blood was 'effused into the distended sac of the pericardium, and afterwards separated, as is usual with extravasated blood, into these two parts, red clot and watery serum.'—David Smith, 'The Days of His Flesh.'

A student went to a professor of theology, and asked him how long it took him to understand the Atonement. The professor thought a minute, then looked him in the face. 'Eternity,' he said, 'eternity; and I won't understand it then.'

We are dealing with facts; we need not be distressed if we do not understand them. God's love—how could we? God's forgiveness—how could we?—Henry Drummond, in 'The Ideal Life.'

Can anything be sadder than work left unfinished? Yes, work never begun.—Christina Rossetti.

(FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES.')

'Ah, there is the terrible consummate testimony of what sin is. We come to the profoundest knowledge and the profoundest hatred of it when we come to this, that it crucified the Son of God with wicked men, it made Jesus the sharer of our human woe.'—Phillips Brooks.

'He who exclaimed, "I thirst," was the same who had made the sea and the dry land. All streams and fountains, all wells and waterbrooks, and the rivers that run among the hills, all were his. He thirsts

that we may not thirst, that we may receive from him that gift of the water of life which shall cause us never to thirst any more.'—'Trench.'

'Only when all else had been attended to ("Knowing that all things are finished") was Christ free to attend to his own physical sensations. They filled a sponge, because a cup was impracticable, and put it around a stalk of hyssop, and thus applied the restorative to his mouth. The plant called "hyssop" has not been identified. All that was requisite was a reed two or three feet long, as the crucified was only slightly elevated.' 'Expos. Greek Test.' 'He had refused the stupefying draught, which would have clouded his faculties; he accepts what will revive them for the effort of a willing surrender of his life.'—'Cambridge Bible.'

Who gave burial to the body of Jesus? Joseph of Arimathea,—probably the modern hill-village of Beit-Rima, thirteen miles east-northeast of Lydda. He was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, 'a rich man' (Matthew), 'a good man and a righteous' (Luke), 'who was looking for the kingdom of God' (Luke) which Jesus had preached, and 'a councillor of honorable estate' (Mark), that is, a member of the sanhedrin, who had 'not consented' (Luke) to the verdict of the sanhedrin condemning Jesus. He went 'boldly' (Mark) to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. 'He is no longer a secret disciple. The cross transfigures cowards into heroes.'—'Cambridge Bible.' 'It was no light matter Joseph had undertaken: for to take part in a burial, at any time, would defile him for seven days, and make everything unclean which he touched (Num. xix., 11; Hag. ii., 13); and to do so now involved his seclusion through the whole Passover week, with all its holy observances and rejoicings.'—'Geikie.' Joseph, however, did not flinch, but even used for burial 'his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock' (Matthew).

Who aided Joseph in this loving task? Another member of the sanhedrin, Nicodemus, which at the first (John iii.) came to Jesus by night. Once he had ventured cautiously to interpose in Jesus' behalf when an attempt was made to seize him (John vii., 44-52). Now he saw 'a last opportunity for service, and a bitter consolation for having failed where he might have done much.'—R. C. Gillie. He also was a rich man, and he brought 100 Roman pounds (1,200 ounces) of myrrh-resin and pounded aloe-wood, aromatic and preservative substances used by the Jews in wrapping up the dead. Mary the mother of Jesus and Mary Magdalene were of the little party that performed the last sad services.

Bible References.

Matt. xxvii., 31-61; Mark xv., 20-47; Luke xxiii., 26-56; John i., 29; iii., 14-16; xii., 32; Rev. v., 12; II. Tim. iv., 7, 8; Gal. ii., 20; v., 24; vi., 14.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, May 24.—Topic—Being a Christian. III. At the ballot-box. Ps. xxviii., 1-9.

C. E. Topic.

- Monday, May 18.—The Sabbath is a sign. Ezek. xx., 12.
- Tuesday, May 19.—Hallow the Sabbath. Ezek. xlv., 24.
- Wednesday, May 20.—Teaching on the Sabbath. Luke xiii., 10.
- Thursday, May 21.—Healing the sick. Luke xiv., 1-6.
- Friday, May 22.—In the synagogue. Matt. xii., 9-13.
- Saturday, May 23.—The Lord of the Sabbath. Mark ii., 28.
- Sunday, May 24.—Topic—What Jesus did on the Sabbath. Luke iv., 16-22.

Sunday School Offer.

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